Buy the Truth

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Buy the truth, and sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding (Proverbs 23: 23). This verse sounds somewhat surprising, doesn't it? It will certainly trigger many questions in the mind of the readers. What kind of truth did Solomon instruct us to buy? How can we buy truth? And many other questions as well.

The truth that Solomon intended shouldn't be just any other truth. It must be the essence of all truths, which is God Himself, since He is the one true God. Jesus said that He is the truth (John 14: 6). So the ultimate end of all truth seeking efforts should be the one true God. Apostle John wrote, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him **that is true**, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God**, and eternal life (I John 5:20)."

The Core of the Divine Truth

The Apostle Paul said in his epistle to the Ephesians that he has been given this grace, "to make all *men* see what *is the* fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God (Ephesians 3: 9-10)."

The Apostle Paul stated that there was a divine mystery hidden for centuries, which then by the church is made known to all men on earth, as well as to the angels. What kind of divine truth is so important that the residents of earth and heaven should know it?

It is true that God had created the universe and two beings with intelligence, self awareness, and free will, which are angels and humans. Thus, these two beings can choose either to worship God or to rebel against Him. God never repented His decision in this matter. He hopes that these two beings will choose to act positively towards Him. Love, honor, and worship will only be meaningful from the point of view of the recipient if they are bestowed by a being with intelligence, self awareness, and free will. Nobody likes to be respected and loved by a robot.

Angels, under the leadership of Lucifer, started the first rebellion against God. Those fallen angels are then called devils in order to differentiate them from the still loyal angels.

Humans, Adam and Eve, who were put in the Garden of Eden, were faced with two kinds of tree, each of which represented a statement of attitude towards the Creator. Why should there be choices? The answer is to prove to Adam and Eve that they indeed had free will and to prove their heart towards God. Unfortunately, they chose to trust satan more than God, so they decided to eat the forbidden fruit.

Humankind fell into sin, and it became impossible for them to approach God who is Most Holy (Hebrew 12: 14). To see God, and to enter heaven, a man's sin must be settled first. There is only one way to settle sin, that is through death for the wages of sin is death (Rome 6: 23). Sin cannot be settled by good deeds or any other human efforts, so entering heaven is never due to human efforts. Before Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, God had told them the consequence of disobedience which was death.

Since the fall of humans, God had promised a Savior who would be punished for every believer. Adam and Eve had once doubted God, so if they wanted to be saved from death penalty through the Savior, they had to repent and trust in God's promise.

After that, a simple symbolic worship was introduced, which was the slaying of lambs (or other sacrificial animals) on the altar. Those sacrificial animals represented the Promised Savior, and the slaying of them represented the death penalty. This worship would always remind human to the promise of God to send a Savior. Abel followed this symbolic worship precisely, while Cain disobeyed by replacing the animals with fruits of the ground. At that time, fathers functioned as the priests (such as Job), and as the pillar and ground of the truth.

Man did not perform this symbolic truth faithfully, and the situation degenerated to the point where, at the time of Noah, only he alone remained faithful. God wiped all humans out of the face of the earth except Noah and his family. The first thing Noah did when he came out of the ark was build an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offering on the altar.

One of Noah's sons, Ham, begat Cush and Cush begat Nimrod. Under Nimrod the human race once again rebelled against God. So God confounded their language so that human beings were scattered based on their language groups.

The New Era of Physical Symbolic Worship

Abraham was chosen to become a nation that would keep the symbolic worship introduced by God in order to remind all human beings of His promise. In short, Abraham's descendants were brought out of Egypt after sacrificing a lamb for each house and striking its blood on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, thus forming a cross.

At the Mount of Sinai, they were officially made a nation. God then revealed the Torah to Moses as their national constitution and replaced the priesthood of fathers with the Aaronic priesthood. The Israelites were established as the keepers of the symbolic worship until the coming of the Savior who was represented by it.

The serpent of brass made by Moses in the wilderness, and the rock gushing out water both referred to the promised Savior. Jesus Christ said that all that was written in the Torah, Nabium (Prophets), and Kethubim (Holy Writings) pointed towards Him (Luke 24: 44).

Finally, John the Baptist appeared and pointed to the promised Savior. His appearance put an end on the whole chain of symbolic worship ordained in the Old Testament (Matthew 11: 13, Luke 16: 16). After that time, the time of symbolic worship ended since Jesus who was symbolized by it had come.

For everyone in the Old Testament time who repented and believed in the COMING Savior, his sins would be counted as settled through Christ, since Jesus replaced his position, bearing the penalty of all his sins. Meanwhile, everyone in the New Testament time who believes in the Savior who HAS come to bear the penalty of his sins will be called a saint. Everyone, from Adam unto the last man on earth, is saved by Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. Babies and demented people who can't possibly understand the salvation message and thus can't repent and trust Jesus, can obtain salvation without any response needed because Adam's sins were settled by Christ (Rome 5: 18-19).

The Aaronic priesthood was ended and replaced by the priesthood of believers, even a royal priesthood (I Peter 2: 9). The church, a group of believer who have repented, is the pillar and ground of the truth replacing the Israelites' position (I Timothy 3: 15). God ordained two ceremonies as reminders for the believer of the gospel events that have saved them. First is baptism, in which a believer is put under water as a symbol of death and burial, and then raised up again as a symbol of resurrection.

Second is the Lord's Supper to remind the believers of the body (symbolized by bread) and blood (symbolized by wine) of Christ on the cross.

In a biblical church, there must not be a position of priest, because every believer is a priest for himself and Jesus Christ is the Chief Priest. There must not also be priestly activities, such as blessing of the church members by the pastor at the end of a service. The Lord's Supper must not be called "Holy Communion" because there is no communion that can make us holy. It should be the "Lord's Supper," that is the last supper that Jesus had as a reminder to the believers of Christ.

The lamb on the altar is a symbolic ceremony of the coming salvation process while baptism is a symbolic ceremony of the salvation process that has happened. In the Old Testament time, God never approved lambs to be replaced by fruits of the earth (such as done by Cain), and God surely will not approve baptism to be replaced by flag ceremony or by sprinkling of water. Moreover, God will not approve those who never perform baptism, because it will mean eliminating the symbolic worship that represents the Gospel of Salvation. In the book of Jude it is written, "Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core" (Jude 1: 11)" The way of Cain was actually the replacing of sacrificial animal with vegetables or fruits that had no meaning whatsoever.

Spiritual Worship Era

Since the appearance of John the Baptist, the whole chain of Old Testament has been fulfilled, not cancelled, but fulfilled. That's why we don't need to sacrifice any lambs, and we are allowed to eat any meat, since the physical worship era has been ended.

God said to the Samaritan woman, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (John 4: 23). Worship in spirit and truth means that we are no longer constrained by time and place, or physical posture, since spiritual worship is in essence **the attitude of our hearts towards God at all times.** The spiritual worship with our hearts is not a ritual. Actually, Christians gather together every Sunday not for worship ceremony, but for the assembling of the church. There is singing, bible studying, and everything else which are positive for the development of the church. In the assembly, everything must be done decently and in order (I Corinthians 14: 40).

The assembly of Christians is sometimes called "worship" due to influence from other religious concepts. Indonesian Bible Institution added the word *worship* (or *ibadah* in Indonesian language) which is not in the original text of Hebrew 10: 25 possibly due to Islamic concept influence which is still rooted in symbolic worship.

Christianity has entered into the era of spiritual worship of the hearts with truth. It is not right to tell people to raise their hands to worship, since we worship with our hearts not with our hands. It is also not right to tell people to enter into worship, since we worship continually, we don't enter in and come out of worship.

This divine truth is what Paul said hidden for centuries, and is now being manifested by the church which is the body of Christ. This truth, after being taught orally by the apostles, was inspired by the Holy Spirit to be written then canonized to a book.

After the last revelation was given at Patmos island, there is no more revelations. This concept is called closed canon system. The closing of the canon is not due to inabilities or limitations of God, but because the truth in it is standard, definite, and final.

For anyone who understands the truth, if a person claims that he receives revelation, prophesies, or speaks in tongues, those things cannot come from God. After the Bible canon was closed

with the last revelation at Patmos island to Apostle John, the Bible has become the only God's word, and not only one of God's words. All special revelation process has been ended by God so that we can have a standard of truth which is definite. It does not mean that God is not able or that we limit God's ability. It is to ensure that we have a definite standard of truth.

Since then, all gifts and positions related to the revelation process have also been ended, such as: the gift of prophesying, the gift of speaking in tongues, the gift to perform miracles, and the gift to speak in wisdom without learning first.

Dear readers, once again, this is the divine mystery that Apostle Paul said was hidden for centuries, and now is owned by the church which is the body of Christ to be made known to all men on earth and all angels in heaven.

Don't you think that you should own it? Those who own it have life, since the essence of truth is God Himself, who is life. The price of this truth will increase over time. It can even cost you your head. That's why you must buy it now.